



Case Study:

HOLISTIC HEALTH & WELL-BEING



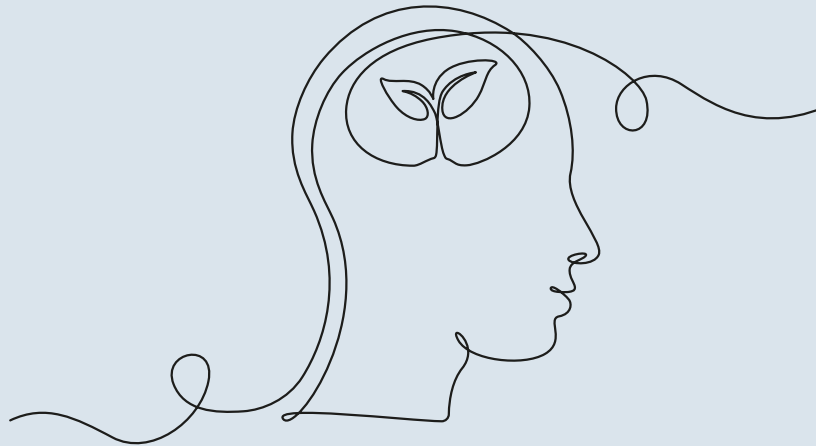
**COMMUNITIES
BUILDING YOUTH
FUTURES (CBYF)**

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communities' actions and
opinions as of March 2024

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Cover Photo: Cottonbro Studio



MEET JORDAN

COMMUNITY
Port Alberni, BC



Jordan Higgins is pretty far from where she pictured herself at eleven years old—and she’s perfectly happy with that. Jordan was born and raised in Port Alberni and has been living there for almost all of her 23 years. She didn’t have too much trouble getting straight A’s in high school and she harbored dreams of becoming a doctor after getting her BSc.

"I applied to the University of Alberta in Edmonton and I also applied to the University of Victoria. [...] I initially got accepted into the University of Victoria with a little bit of a scholarship, so that was nice to have an extra two grand taken off of my tuition. But I [didn't] want to go there. I really wanted to go to Edmonton. And then I found out that I didn't get into University of Alberta and I was heartbroken. But I went down to Victoria, actually checked out the campus, and [decided] Victoria's far enough away."

Although Jordan was happy with her choice and she loved many aspects of her first year, the academic transition wasn’t as smooth as she hoped it would be. Returning to school in her second year was difficult.

"My mental health just took a huge downward spiral. [...] I was trying to go see the counselor on campus and they kept telling me, "we're full, come back in a couple of months". And I [said,] "I need help now, not in a few months". So I went to the doctor clinic on campus and they were amazing. Thankfully the nurse that I talked to [said], "do you want to stay here for the day? Do you have anywhere to go? We can't get you in to see a doctor until the afternoon, but what do you need?""

“ I was trying to go see the counselor on campus and they kept telling me, “we’re full, come back in a couple of months.” **Jordan**



MEET JORDAN

"I was just so caught up in the idea that you need to go to university after high school. That's all that I could think of. [Eventually,] I packed up everything, dropped out of school partway through second year and moved home. And then eight months later, COVID hit."

Back in Port Alberni, surrounded by family and friends, Jordan ended up applying for and receiving her primary care paramedic diploma. She now works as a paramedic on the side and does search and rescue, with one of her coworkers, for Alberni Drug & Alcohol Prevention Services (ADAPS). Both of which complement the focus of her current community work under the Alberni Clayoquot Health Network (ACHN).

Port Alberni is the only city in the Alberni-Clayoquot region but with a population of just over 18,000 it can still feel small. The Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District, which ACHN services, is located in west central Vancouver Island and includes rural and remote communities in the Barkley Sound and far west coast. Although Jordan remembers lots to do up to the age of thirteen, activities start to dry up after that. Bamfield, a community in the Barkley Sound, got a high school again; prior to that, Jordan recalls students having to come to Port Alberni, away from their support systems at a young age, just to access high school education. In the West Coast communities, such as Tofino, there is only one elementary school and one high school that services a huge area. If youth miss the bus, they need to be driven for about forty minutes by a parent or guardian to go to school—if they're lucky enough to have an available guardian.

"So you start in Port Alberni, where youth already feel pretty isolated and without a lot to do, and as you move out further there's just less resources and less access."

Jordan has always wanted to help people. In her community, she works towards improving access to healthcare and mental health, but also, access to prosocial programming and leadership opportunities that will pay in health dividends for years to come, by establishing a healthy foundation from which to grow.

“ Jordan recalls students having to come to Port Alberni, away from their support systems at a young age, just to access high school education.”

MEET JORDAN

MEET CBYF

HIGHLIGHTED DATA FROM 20 CBYF COMMUNITIES BETWEEN 2020 AND 2024

Tamarack Institute's Communities Building Youth Futures (CBYF) is a place-based network empowering youth like Jordan to become leaders, innovators, and decision-makers. CBYF is more than a program; it's a movement that places **youth at the center** of local community change. With a focus on small, rural, and remote areas, CBYF uses a place-based approach and **the collective impact framework** to support youth, adult allies, and partners in collaboratively building a bright and prosperous future for themselves, their peers, and their community.

To nurture a pan-Canadian collective of changemakers, Tamarack fosters peer networks, annual gatherings, and accessible support structures through the CBYF network. These systems help communities connect both locally and nationally, cultivating ecosystems to support youth, sustain initiatives, and encourage sustainable interventions. Tamarack's support has been crucial to the success of CBYF, as it has accelerated collaboration, learning and the exchange of new solutions and practices.

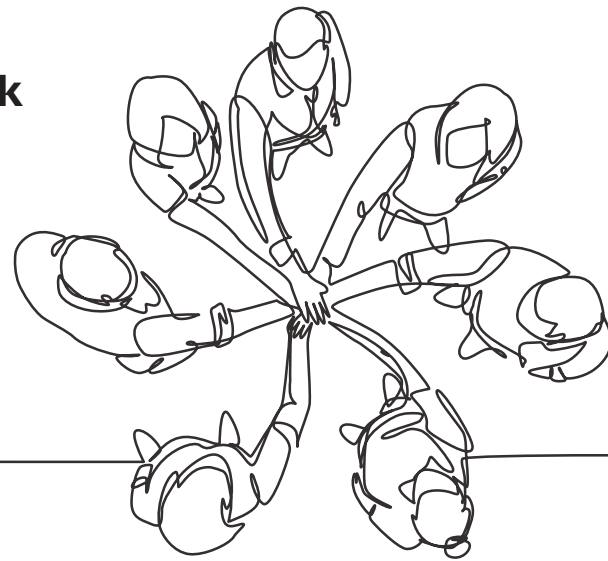
Data to highlight across the network of 20 CBYF communities

YOUTH REACHED

63,938 youth reached

2,567 youth joined a leadership table

2,025 youth hired to backbone staff team



TAMARACK'S COMMUNITY INVESTMENTS & SUPPORTS

1,000+ coaching calls & support sessions delivered

770 accessible tools, resources, and publications shared

130+ community of practice sessions hosted

5 national gatherings hosted, engaging the entire CBYF network

MEET JORDAN

MEET CBYF

HIGHLIGHTED DATA FROM 20 CBYF
COMMUNITIES BETWEEN 2020 AND 2024

"My favorite part about Tamarack was that they brought all these communities from across Canada together, and you wouldn't think that a small town in Port Alberni on Vancouver Island would have the same things going on as the Yukon, but we do. There were so many similarities across the board between these youth and what they're doing, and it was just so amazing to get to talk to another group to [say,] "oh, you're having the same issue come up. What did you do with that?" Jordan

Meet the CBYF Network

CBYF was designed to mentor youth on the road to success, empowering them to define the meaning of success and pave their own way towards it. 20 distinct regions across Canada are engaging in this crucial work, by leveraging the assets and expertise of the whole community to support youth futures.

While each community's initiatives and strategies may differ based on their specific context and youth needs, the goal of CBYF is universal: **to improve education outcomes and help youth successfully transition from education to employment to adulthood, and beyond.**

Meet CBYF's Cross Cutting Themes

By December 2020, through research and comprehensive community consultations, the CBYF network identified **six major themes** related to academic and

employment success for youth. These themes reveal the interconnected and often concealed factors that influence a youth's ability to engage fully in work and school.



Employment &
Mentorship



Accessible
Education



Identity & Social
Connections



Service Navigation and
Access to Supports



Youth Engagement
and Leadership



Holistic Health
& Well-being

You can explore each community's priorities by diving into their **Plans on a Page**. These plans detail the community's vision for change, core strategies to achieve

their goals, intended outcomes, and research that informed the plan.

MEET JORDAN

MEET CBYF

HIGHLIGHTED DATA FROM 20 CBYF
COMMUNITIES BETWEEN 2020 AND 2024



Photo: Andrea Piacquadio

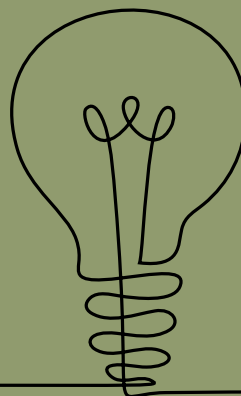
Spotlight on: Holistic Health and Well-being

Holistic health can be hard to define or pin down, conceptually. In part, because it is all encompassing in nature. Holistic health leads to well-being; it considers our physical, mental and spiritual health as a triad. Only when all three are tended to in equal measure can we truly experience well-being. Often, an initiative nominally focuses on one aspect of this triad but processually touches on the other two aspects of holistic health. The interconnectivity that holistic health emphasizes can help us conceptualize how a project that seeks to address spiritual health is also acting upon mental health outcomes which in turn affect physical health.

CBYF was designed to mentor youth on the road to success, empowering them to define the meaning of success and pave their own way towards it. 20 distinct regions across Canada are engaging in this crucial

work, by leveraging the assets and expertise of the *whole* community to support youth futures. By using a transformative and holistic approach driven by the Collective Impact framework, CBYF supports young people in re-engaging, or staying engaged, in their community during a crucial period of development. The model underscores the need for and benefits of community-driven innovation; long-term change is made sustainable through adaptation and a commitment to remaining open to new ideas. By investing in the well-being and resilience of youth populations, CBYF is contributing to the overall health and success of communities nationally. [Section 5](#) explores exciting examples of youth-led initiatives working to improve holistic health and well-being across Canada, while developing new solutions where gaps exist.

JORDAN MEETS CBYF



Before leaving for university, Jordan was very active in her community. She taught ice skating at the local arena, worked for day camps during the summer and over spring break, and other parks and recreation initiatives for the City. Once she was back and working at Alberni Drug & Alcohol Prevention Service (ADAPS), she heard about CBYF from a friend—and that they were hiring.

"I've always really loved working with the youth. It'd be a change to go from the young ones to 15 plus and teenagers. And I [thought,] I'm also in that age [group], of the youth that they're capturing. So my opinions also matter. And I feel like my whole personal experience of going through university... youth need to know that university isn't always what you have to go and do. So that's all the things that drove me to apply. And then, yeah, it's been really neat just making this project what I wanted [it] to look like."

Jordan was hired as one of the CBYF youth Engagement Facilitators. Because ACHN is made up of three primary regions with many communities within, the team decided to hire a Youth Engagement Facilitator for each community, instead of just one. The new job was huge for Jordan's personal development and deepened her knowledge of her community's needs, beyond her personal experiences.

"I got a job because my parents were there to help me write a resume and a cover letter and apply to jobs, whereas some youth don't have that help. [...] We've been discussing drop-in centers, and we've been asking them—'what would you want?' And they, [say] 'we want to know how to write a resume. We want to know how to apply for a job. We want to know this, this, and this.' They want all those supports because a lot of them

“ They want all those supports because a lot of them don't get them at home or from other adults that they can trust. [...] It's very hard to realize what opportunities are out there if you don't have anyone telling you about them.” **Jordan**



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Jordan understands what it's like to reach out for help only to be rebuffed. She understands how finding the resource you need can feel impossible when you don't know where to look. Jordan wanted to be part of a solution and uplift the youth in her region but she knew that focusing on only one aspect of their lives wouldn't cut it.

"When CBYF first started [in the Alberni Clayoquot region], we knew that Tamarack and the Ministry of Education wanted to increase high school graduation rates. We realized that it's really hard to increase high school graduation rates when youth aren't even being supported in going to school in the first place. So that's where we started."

"Youth need to feel like they're safe and they belong. Somewhere in the past two years, there's just been a lot of gang activity with youth. So a lot of youth were actually nervous and scared to go to school. [...] How do [we] make it so that [youth] feel safe to go there? What can [we] do to make youth feel like they belong somewhere? And let's get them some mental health support so that they can support themselves and have the capacity to go to school and learn."

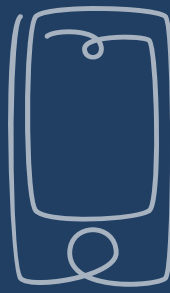
A baseline feeling of safety is essential for holistic health and well-being. Compounding the issue of absenteeism, school is also where most youth know they can find a counselor or youth worker.

"...When I was going through high school, I didn't know that there was anything other than a school counselor to talk to. I had no idea that there was other counseling supports in the area. Conveniently. Now [...] working with one of the youth nonprofits in the area, I have learned that there's so many more supports like this."

Jordan is lucky to work in a field that grants her exposure to resources in her area. Many more youth have no such knowledge which is why the team decided to expand the coverage of the BeSafe App, discussed in the next section.

“ A baseline feeling of safety is essential for holistic health and well-being. Compounding the issue of absenteeism, school is also where most youth know they can find a counselor or youth worker.” **”**

MEET THE BESAFE APP



Jordan's lived experiences and schooling helped to inform her work with youth, which was also impacted by Port Alberni's recent focus on harm reduction. In 2023, the Alberni-Clayoquot region experienced the third highest lethal overdose rate per capita in the province amidst an ongoing opioid crisis declared provincially in 2016. Those numbers coalesce around Port Alberni as the only city in the region.

Toni Buston coordinates the West Coast communities and is based in Ucluelet, which is separated from Port Alberni by a mountain range. The West Coast works primarily to connect existing networks and services workers. Across from Toni, on the other side of Barkley Sound, Jaslyn Haberl in Bamfield/Anacla does double duty as a CBYF Coordinator and as the school coordinator for the community's first high school in over a decade. Jaslyn works within the school network, although she solves problems that connect and relate to those in Port Alberni and on the West Coast.

"For the youth on the West Coast, it's extremely different in each community. I would say there's a theme of isolation, for sure. There are a lot of resources, in some ways in our region, and in other ways there's a lack of [resources] and a lack of diversity I would say." **Toni Buston**

"At school we have a part-time counselor—and he's great—but if you don't connect with him, or you don't want to connect with a male, or if it doesn't work for you...well... and then there's limited hours, there's isolation, geographically, from accessing those services—you might have to drive pretty far. They are great and they are there and there are a lot of incredible workers there but there is a lack of diversity and availability." **Toni**

“ For the youth on the West Coast, it's extremely different in each community. I would say there's a theme of isolation, for sure.” **Toni**



MEET THE BESAFE APP



Even when service providers are there, it doesn't mean youth will know about them. Jordan visited local schools trying to get the word out and used the Harm Reduction Howl¹ event as an avenue for promoting the app. But sometimes, there really **are no service providers in your area**.

*"There were no youth programs in our community, there were no extra-curricular activities, there were no **curricular** activities before the school and there are now; many of those wouldn't have existed without CBYF. So the funding, the project structure, the ability to collaborate with these awesome people, really transformed what was available for youth—who are now staying in town." Jaslyn*

Each community's focus was slightly different; however, the larger region does share some common barriers that the CBYF team was able to address collaboratively. One of those projects was the expansion of **BeSafe**, an evidence-informed safety planning and service navigation app developed in partnership with youth. The app is the product of a multi-sectoral network of stakeholders created to improve access to and coordination of mental health and addiction services for youth and families. It was developed in Ontario in 2014 but expanded to communities spanning both coasts in 2019. There is a yearly fee to support the maintenance and ongoing support of the app and the funding that came with joining CBYF's network helped to unlock this resource for a region that desperately needed it.

"... At events, we asked, 'What's missing?' and then we'd try to [say,] 'here's this app that has information. Here's ways that you can reach out and here's a starting point that you can go to'. It's really hard to target those [youth] that aren't at school for those [events]. And without going door to door everywhere, you probably wouldn't capture that voice, but you can capture that [missing] voice [by asking] youth that are there what they're feeling and why they're uneasy about coming to school every day." Jordan

“ For the youth on the West Coast, it's extremely different in each community. I would say there's a theme of isolation, for sure.” **Toni**

¹ The Harm Reduction Howl is a harm reduction event organized by Eighth Avenue Learning Centre and supported by CBYF Port Alberni, local youth serving orgs, a high school and the RCMP.

MEET THE BESAFE APP



BeSafe helps deliver valuable information to youth in **Port Alberni** who aren't attending school with much regularity; it helps youth on the **West Coast** who may not know they can connect with a youth worker one town over; and, it helps youth in **Bamfield** access virtual services if there are no in-person options nearby (the population of Bamfield is 201, according to 2021 data). In addition to the service it provides to youth, BeSafe helped all three subregions to improve their own work.

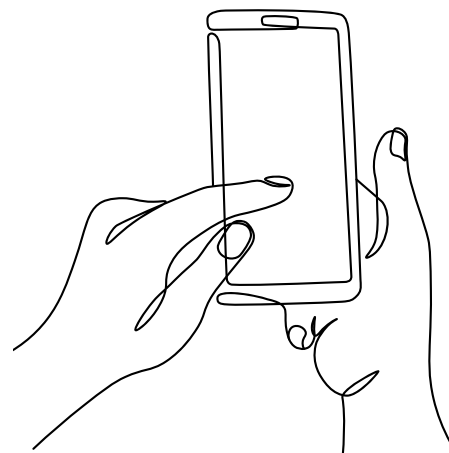
"Outside of youth engaging with the app, [BeSafe] provided some training for our youth workers and so some of the folks who work in the Barkley communities with youth or in a youth facing role had never had support in how to [engage] youth in safety planning. [They] were doing work from [their] lived experience and so it was really helpful to have some of that training—not only to the CBYF project but other colleagues and services for youth in the community." Jaslyn

"We can get statistics from the app based on how many youth have downloaded it and what they're looking for. I mean, it's completely anonymous. We can't see who's using it for what reason or where that number comes from, but we can see if youth are actually using it and going through the resources. I've also told other positive adults in the community, whether it be a couple paramedics, some teachers, ones that are very involved in youth in their days about the app, so they can also be going through it with youth." Jordan

BeSafe works to connect youth and their families with the resources they need. By providing training modules, BeSafe works to leverage existing networks in the areas it operates and helps workers to align on best practices. Although not acting directly on spiritual health, the ability to lead a purposeful life is contingent upon mental and physical health. Viewing personal addiction and mental health struggles as challenges to be overcome, rather than insurmountable barriers, is the beginning of a widening horizon of potential. If they can connect their lived experience to wider systems they may begin to work towards changing those systems for the betterment of all.

Jordan Higgins is living proof.

“ Viewing personal addiction and mental health struggles as challenges to be overcome, rather than insurmountable barriers, is the beginning of a widening horizon of potential.”



MEET CBYF'S IMPACT ON

HOLISTIC HEALTH & WELL-BEING



CBYF Alberni-Clayoquot's success with BeSafe really comes from the connections it forges—between health professionals and youth as well as between subregions. Just providing information can ease the mental distress that comes with isolation, be that perceived or geographic or a combination of the two. Holistic health and well-being is all about forging such connections between bodies and minds.

BeSafe targets mental and physical health but below we dive deep into three other community projects in Kahnawà:ke, Sudbury, and Yellowknife, that address the theme of Holistic Health and Well-being on a more spiritual level. Spiritual health involves taking the time to reflect on the meaning of events in one's life in order to move towards leading a purposeful life that connects one's values and beliefs to something greater than the self. In many cases, that "something greater" is the community one is a part of.

INCREASING VISIBILITY

In **Sudbury, Ontario** and in **Yellowknife, Northwest Territories** CBYF members launched visual campaigns aimed to celebrate youth in the community. These campaigns were meant to be uplifting, literally increasing the visibility of youth within the community and elevating their voices as part of public discourse.



CBYF'S IMPACT ON HOLISTIC HEALTH & WELL-BEING



Hope | Espoir Campaign SUDBURY, ONTARIO

In Sudbury, Future North (FKA CBYF Sudbury) launched the “Hope | Espoir” Campaign in collaboration with their Youth Expert Panel which involved a series of eight billboards around Sudbury. Each billboard featured a youth leader and included quotes about hopefulness, leadership, as well as community and cultural pride, all filtered through personal testimony. An additional 250 posters were printed and distributed, papering downtown Sudbury in a wash of positive youth voices boldly declaring themselves as relevant and important, challenging received narratives of youth apathy.

Leading up to the launch, Future North held a series of reflection sessions to help youth

draw out their stories through conversation. These sessions helped youth to learn from the experiences they were sharing and to refine their intended messages for public consumption. By intentionally including diverse youth voices, Future North helped to amplify systematically underrepresented youth demographics.

“Personally, as one of the only hijabi youth in a mostly white town, it can be very isolating. Participating in the Hope Campaign and seeing myself or those that look like me on a billboard was significant. I think it has the potential to impact others with increased visibility of PoC youth.” Youth Participant



Youth of Yellowknife

YELLOWKNIFE, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Taking inspiration from the popular blog *Humans of New York*, CBYF Yellowknife embarked on a photo campaign to share the stories of everyday youth. The project featured twenty-four unique youth, acting as a platform for youth to express their experiences and concerns. Like *Humans of New York*, honesty and vulnerability were encouraged. The campaign hoped to function as a recognition that the process of transitioning from a youth to an adult can be “messy,” but that this messiness is a normal developmental phase worthy, even, of celebration.

Unlike *Humans of New York*, the Youth of Yellowknife project is qualitatively different in part due to the vast differences between the two cities. Structural challenges such as

contracting a photographer who was traveling in from a long distance took a toll on youth participants with some youth dropping out due to the restlessness of waiting around. But these challenges are also what the campaign is about: that youth from Yellowknife are just as worthy of being heard and photographed as anyone in the metropole of New York. The youth who stuck around became thoroughly engaged in the project and, as they participated more and more, their characteristic teen aloofness melted away.

“The Youth of Yellowknife project and watching youth become engaged reminded me of why I became a Youth Leader in the first place”

CBYF Youth Coordinator



SPIRITUAL HEALING

Healing Through Performance Art

KAHNAWÀ:KE, MOHAWK RESERVE

In Kahnawà:ke, the CBYF team identified “Wholistic” Health and Well-being as a major pillar of their work. Kahnawà:ke was the only CBYF community to create an action team, made up of ten youth, specifically around this priority theme. Choosing an alternate spelling to emphasize “wholeness” was an intentional choice by the collective and aims to make language more accessible and immediately understandable.

New networks and partnerships developed and existing networks and partnerships strengthened

The Kahnawà:ke Youth Center (KYC)
Venue rental partner

Kahentiiostha Cross multi-disciplinary artist and after school art room teacher at KYC

Calico Cottage Supplier for traditional craft supplies

Luke Diabo Audio Engineer for event

CBYF'S IMPACT ON HOLISTIC HEALTH & WELL-BEING

Healing Through Performance Art (HTPA), was one of the largest wellness projects the team undertook. Seeking to give Indigenous youth access to creative practices, through providing space, time, and instruction, the project launched a series of wide ranging events but all centered art-making as a form of self expression and self-discovery. Youth participants reported a growth in confidence, interpersonal skills, increased social interaction, and a sharpening of creative abilities.

The workshops aimed to explore art practices that youth may or may not be aware of. They aimed to teach youth but also to provide space to practice said art form. There were sessions on winter paintings and how to depict realism in nature, moccasin painting, Powwow and traditional dancing, cookie decorating, slam poetry, and script writing and prop making.

There was also a series of “open art hangs” the purpose of which was to offer supplies and creative freedom for youth already immersed in ongoing art projects. A workshop on public speaking was offered as well because public speaking is, in its own way, a performance too.



New networks and partnerships developed and existing networks and partnerships strengthened (continued)

The Golden Age Club Kahnawà:ke
Venue rental partner

Russell Ronwahawihtha Delaronde
Artist and highly active community member, husbandry expert

Kaiewate Jacobs & Teioroniathe Phillips Powwow & Traditional Dancing

Iohserahawi Bova Artist & owner of BirdHouseBakes

Ange Loft Multi-disciplinary artist and historian

Throw! Poetry Collective “Throw Poetry Collective was founded in 2007 and is an open Montreal-based poetry collective. We are a group of spoken word poets & community artists who host Canada’s only bilingual poetry slam!”

Dega Lazare Artist/Speaker, Workshop session provider

La Vista Venue rental partner

CBYF'S IMPACT ON HOLISTIC HEALTH & WELL-BEING

All workshops were led by local and/or Indigenous artists which helped to infuse all sessions with cultural knowledge and local history.

HTPA concluded with a Youth Vernissage and Open Mic night that acted as a showcase for all the art created over the course of many months, lending a sense of legitimacy to the young artists as well as bringing the community together for a fun filled social event.

Photo: Chris Robert

New networks and partnerships developed and existing networks and partnerships strengthened *(continued)*

KOR & Scott Berwick Logistics and planning of vernissage

Association des galeries d'art contemporain Exhibit wall rental

Chato SB Banner for vernissage

Kahnawà:ke Shakotia'takehnhas Community Services On-site support councilor to offer support to participants and or facilitator at our Confidence building and public speaking workshop.



IMPACTS ON YOUTH

Across Canada, CBYF's radical community collaborations and youth-for-youth programming reached **63K+ young people**. In late 2023, Tamarack launched a listening campaign to assess how CBYF projects impacted these participants to improve access to important services like mental health care, school, housing, and food. Through surveys and relational meetings, youth had the chance to share their experience and contribute ideas for future cohorts.

This is what they had to say:²

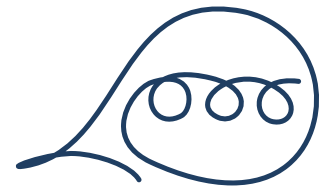
"Through CBYF I got a mental health certificate which helped me be better aware of others feelings in certain situations."

"It's made my view on my life better knowing there's resources."

"I took part in the Health & Wellness action team in the summer. It makes a difference when youths in the community are asked to join in community development."

CBYF initiatives demonstrably prove that placing youth at the center of the work—works. When we listen to youth and incorporate their ideas, youth are more likely to engage with those services—not only accessing what providers seek to offer, but actually working to shape future programs. **54% of youth surveyed indicated that, since getting involved with CBYF, their level of engagement in community activities has increased.** And their continued involvement in the community goes beyond CBYF, **as 59% of youth survey respondents agreed that their involvement with the initiative led them to participate in other community activities outside the project's scope.** Correspondingly, youth found that greater involvement leads to more work being done, creating a positive feedback loop.

² All quotes presented here are the result of dozens of consultation sessions with youth as well as survey responses. Quotes are intentionally left anonymous to preserve youth's privacy.



“It makes a difference when youths in the community are asked to join in community development.”

Youth Participant

CBYF'S IMPACTS ON YOUTH

"[There is] more awareness around community issues [and] more work being done by service organizations in the community."

"Much more engagement and resources."

"More togetherness between community partners and joint programming opportunities."

By finding innovative ways to reach youth and share knowledge with them, CBYF is taking the first steps towards having youth actually access those services. Breaking down information asymmetries between youth and the resources out there for them was a key pillar of CBYF's work and lays the foundation for meaningful community engagement in the future.

"I am so glad there is funding available from CBYF and the Tamarack Institute that allows youth to make their own projects. I am grateful for the experiences I've had with CBYF and the connections I made within Yellowknife. The youth involved in this project have unlimited potential and we should be celebrating their successes."

"Youth and community need to feel like they are a part of something greater than themselves. As a youth leading this program, I certainly gained a lot of hands-on experience delivering a broad variety of art & performance based workshops throughout this program."

“ Breaking down information asymmetries between youth and the resources out there for them was a key pillar of CBYF's work and lays the foundation for meaningful community engagement in the future.”

Photo:
Jason Goodman

MEET

CBYF'S IMPACTS ON YOUTH FUTURES

Each CBYF community is unique; what “holistic health and well being” means for each is entirely different. A multitude of initiatives could be said to be contributing to holistic health as addressing mental, physical, and spiritual health requires a variegated approach. In Sudbury and Yellowknife we highlighted projects that focused on celebrating and uplifting youth in public spaces in the community. Whereas in Kahnawà:ke, holistic health centered on art-making as a means of healing and expression.

Despite these differences, across the country youth were in need of more support in one way or another. CBYF communities rose to this challenge and, due to their unwavering commitment to youth-led collective impact, youth have drastically shifted their outlook on the future, along with a reevaluation of the resources and paths available to them.

"We developed a close relationship with the Department of Education, and collaborated with a youth team on creating a comprehensive mental wellness strategy for students and teachers. Getting a holistic viewpoint on youth's experience of education helped us better understand and target the issues that influence graduation."

"[I] previously didn't believe [I] had the ability to network, utilize resources, [and] bring together [my] vision for the future."

"[My participation with CBYF taught me] to not only contribute but to listen & get perspectives from others. [It] motivated me to attend more community engagement and participate more in general."

“ [A]cross the country youth were in need of more support in one way or another. CBYF communities rose to this challenge and, due to their unwavering commitment to youth-led collective impact, youth have drastically shifted their outlook on the future.”

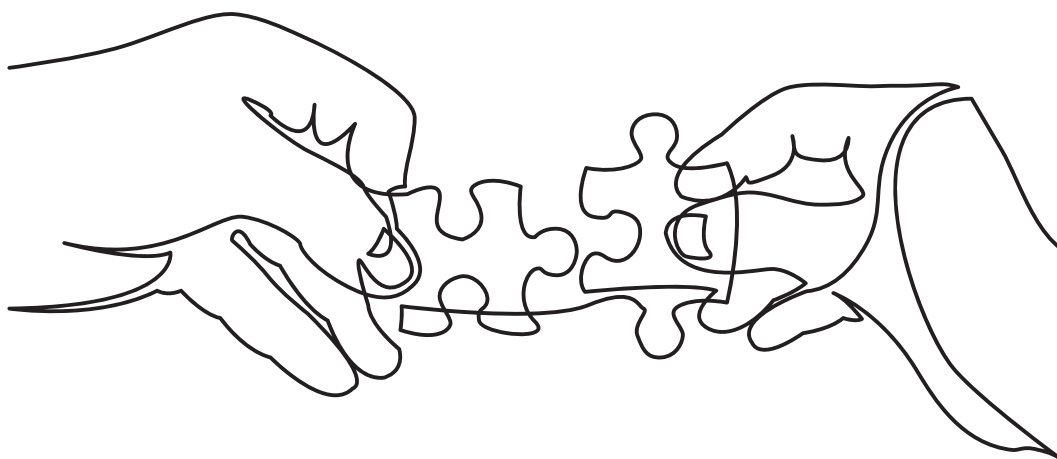
CBYF'S IMPACT ON YOUTH FUTURES

"It impacted me as a person and made me think I'm a better member of the community. I want to continue on, when I graduate, with communication and outreach. Help people and talk back and forth—I got to work on this skill, it was impactful in the project. I got to interact with organizations, people... it helped me decide on another aspect of my postsecondary life which is working in social work, helping troubled youth, helping any way that I can."

"[People] can't ignore it when the collective of people who care is bigger. They can't ignore it when everyone's saying the same thing, then they have to be a part of the conversation. But in order for that to happen, we actually have to open ourselves up and be willing to learn and teach each other. There's a lot of silos, not only in cities, but across the country. Everybody thinks that they're in this alone, and CBYF has definitely shown me that we're not, we just have to make the effort to work together. And what Tamarack has done successfully over and over again is show us exactly how to do that."

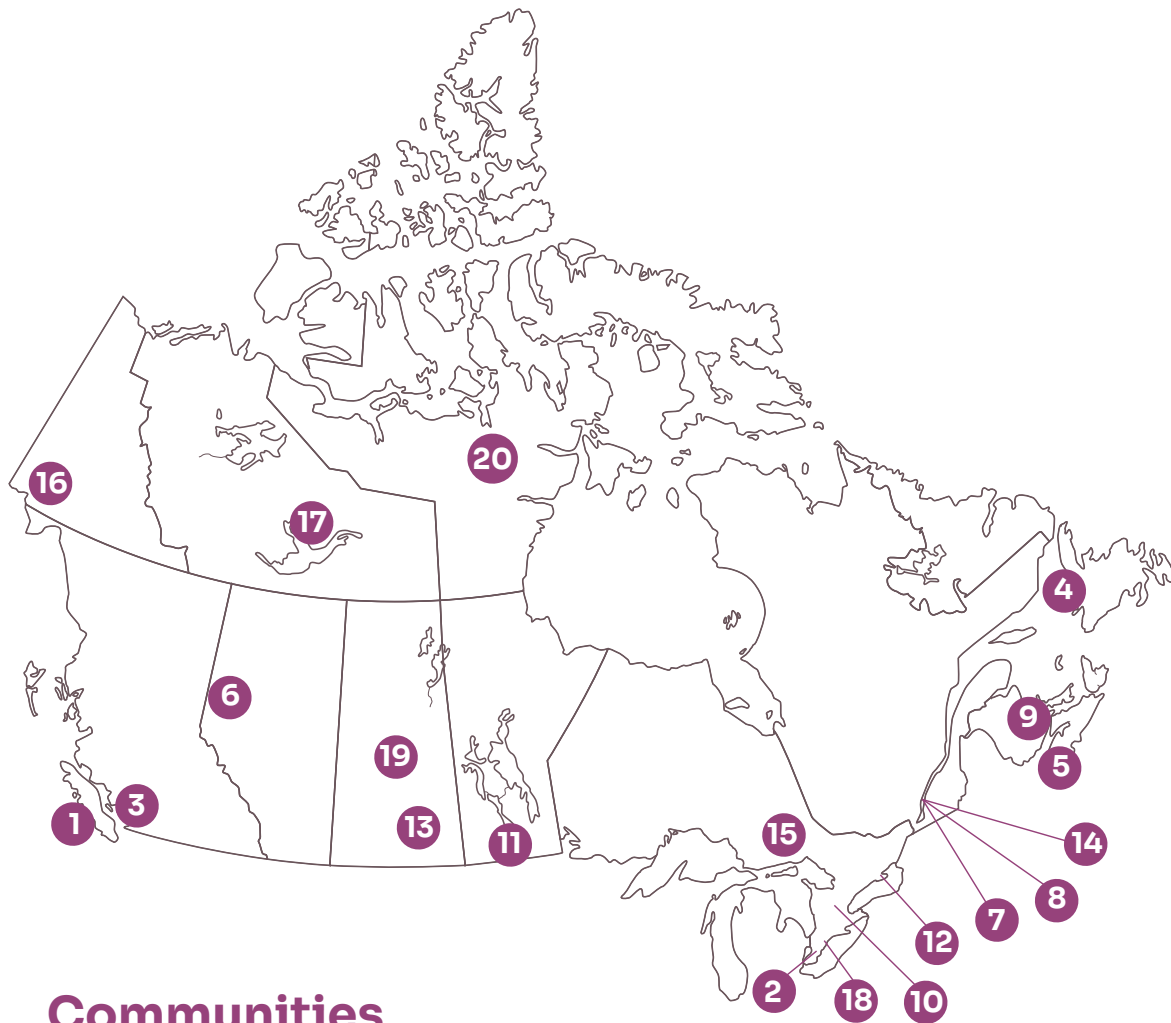
Helping youth work towards holistic health and a sense of well-being during a critical time of development is excellent but creating systemic change is a long process. Four years into CBYF, communities have created long term partnerships, attended major annual events, acquired outside funding and support, and inspired the beginnings of a paradigm shift in rural Canada.

“ Everybody thinks that they're in this alone, and CBYF has definitely shown me that we're not, we just have to make the effort to work together.”
Youth Participant



CBYF'S IMPACT ON YOUTH FUTURES

IMPACT SPOTLIGHT



Communities

- | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Alberni-Clayoquot | 9. Moncton | 16. Whitehorse, Yukon |
| 2. Chatham-Kent | 10. Oxford County | 17. Yellowknife |
| 3. Chilliwack | 11. Portage La Prairie | 18. Chippewas of the Thames |
| 4. Corner Brook | 12. Prince Edward County | 19. Prince Albert |
| 5. Digby | 13. Regina | 20. Nunavut |
| 6. Grande Prairie | 14. Saint-Léonard | |
| 7. Kahnawà:ke | 15. Sudbury | |
| 8. Laval | | |

IMPACT SPOTLIGHT

Evidence of systems-level impact generated by CBYF include:

GREATER ALIGNMENT BETWEEN EXISTING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

- **Chatham-Kent** presented to 500 teachers on how to connect youth to opportunities in the trades, and held a meeting with school board representatives who were interested in bringing this information into classrooms.
- **Laval** created connection, alignment, and a common vision amongst local service providers for how to best serve youth. Now the community organizes a bi-yearly event that connects over 150+ orgs, united around youth engagement.
- **Port Alberni** partnered with WorkBC to develop employment counseling workshops to secondary students offered. Workshops were open to all community members, and could be used as optional credits for students approaching graduation.
- **Yellowknife** created a Community Youth Network, made up of 20 members representing both the private and public sectors. The collective is dedicated to breaking down cross-sector silos, and connecting youth to diverse programs and supports.

CHANGES IN ORGANIZATIONAL AND/OR PUBLIC POLICY

- **Digby** held a meeting with the Director of Community Transportation for Nova Scotia's Public Works to share youth-focused data, and a report on the state of rural transportation.
- **Sudbury** provided \$5,000 to youth to create a local tech hub, supporting those without access to technology. The youth team presented a report on their research and project proposal to the City of Greater Sudbury and Ontario Telemedicine Network, to engage the municipality and expand access to the service.
- **Yukon** organized a high-impact meeting with 11 Yukon Government deputy ministers, pitching and showcasing the work of CBYF. The ministers committed to exploring methods of integrating youth-led decision making into political processes.

IMPACT SPOTLIGHT

- **Chippewas of the Thames First Nation** met with elected Band Council members to discuss creating a new stand alone youth department. The developing department will be youth-led, and focused on engaging the youth perspective to support the growth and resilience of the community.

CHANGES IN ORGANIZATIONAL PRACTICE

- **Prince Albert** partnered with local high schools to offer alternative credit options for students to explore local cultural history, and supported teachers to facilitate reconciliation-related projects.
- **Yukon** youth delivered Mental Health & Wellness Kits to high schools through partnering with the Department of Education, and led a training program to educators on how to create inclusive and welcoming spaces.
- **Alberni-Clayoquot** youth spoke at a gathering of 100+ health workers on the needs and priorities of their peers in the region. Their advocacy resulted in Island Health reinstating a nurse previously withdrawn from the public school, a direct result of the youth's persuasive presentation.
- **Oxford County** offered free mental health workshops for community members who work with young people, including coaches, teachers, guidance counselors, and librarians, including how to engage and serve youth who have experienced trauma.
- **Corner Brook** increased the capacity and reach of local youth service providers by providing 7 free trainings for staff teams. Workshops focused on youth-engagement best practices, and how to retain youth as volunteers and employees.



CBYF'S IMPACT ON YOUTH FUTURES

IMPACT SPOTLIGHT

NEW FUNDING FLOWS

- **Portage** secured a \$250,000 grant from the Rideau Foundation to maintain and expand the Roving Campus.
- **Digby** was awarded \$40,000 from the Catherine Donnelly Foundation to support the Black Youth Changemakers program.
- **Chilliwack secured an additional \$20,000** from RBC for the expansion of ASH.
- **The City of Grande Prairie** became CBYF's new fiscal sponsor, and provides an additional \$3,000 in funding.
- **The Alberni-Clayoquot Region** leveraged CBYF capacity-building to support their successful grant application for a **regional Foundry**.
- **Prince Albert** received \$20,000 in funding from the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association (CPRA) to provide access to physical activity for underfunded communities.

All of the projects explored benefitted from the knowledge sharing that The Tamarack Institute facilitated, allowing communities to go beyond the constituencies with whom they regularly work to reframe their efforts and magnify their reach. Kania and Kramer (2011) write, "...collective impact is not merely a matter of encouraging more collaboration or public private partnerships. It requires a systemic approach to social impact that focuses on the relationships between organizations and the process toward shared objectives".³

Relationship building takes time because brokering real trust is no small task. However, trust between youth and youth serving organizations is the bedrock of real change; although we may only be beginning to see the roots of change, statements from youth, like those above, are an inspiring reason to keep pushing to increase equitable access to high-quality programming.

³ Kania, J., & Kramer, M. (2011, Winter). Collective impact. Stanford Social Innovation Review. https://ssir.org/articles/entry/collective_impact



COMMUNITIES BUILDING YOUTH FUTURES

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